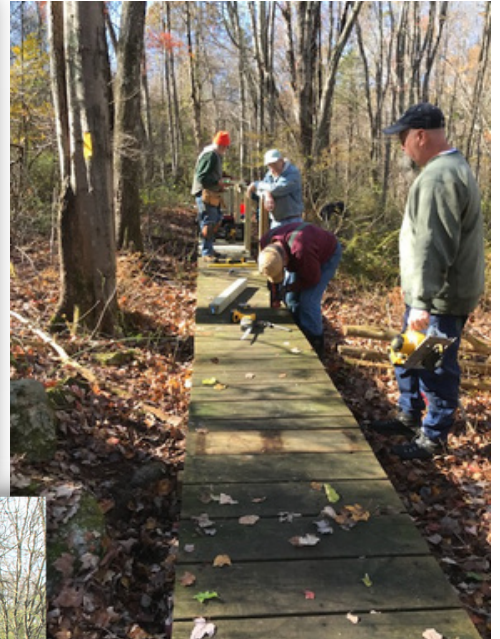




## HONORING OUR VOLUNTEERS.



**Volunteers have always been at the heart of Joshua's Trust. When Joshua's Trust was founded, everything was done by a dedicated group of volunteers. Over time the number of volunteers has grown. When the Trust became accredited in 2011, it became necessary to hire staff to keep in line with standards and practices. But even with staff, Joshua's Trust could never protect over 5,000 acres without the hard work of volunteers. So, this newsletter is going to highlight just a fraction of the work that volunteers are doing at Joshua's Trust. There is always, always, room for more!**



# JOSHUA'S TRUST NEWS

## JOSHUA'S TRUST

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The Atwood Farm

624 Wormwood Hill Rd., Mansfield Ctr.

Phone: 860-429-9023

### OFFICERS

President: Robert Beach

Vice President: Betsy Paterson

Secretary: Karen Zimmer

Treasurer: Gail Bruhn

### STAFF

Executive Director: Michael Hveem

Finance Administrator: Joyce Fountain

Volunteer Coordinator: Andy Woodcock

Development Administrator: Kailyn Murphy

Stewardship Coordinator: Ada Snodgrass

Land Protection Manager: Bryan Avery

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert Beach, Mansfield

Gail Bruhn, Mansfield

Marie Cantino, Mansfield

Charles Eaton, Mansfield

John Hankins, Mansfield

Erin King, Mansfield

Scott Matthies, Chaplin

Chris McKleroy, Hampton

Betsy Paterson, Mansfield

Marilyn Schreiber, Willington

Terry Wakeman, Ashford

Karen Zimmer, Mansfield



The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

## ANSWER THE CALL

by Rob Beach, President

I am an accidental volunteer. When we moved to Storrs eight and a half years ago, I had no particular intention to help out with Joshua's Trust. It was not an accident, however, that we chose a building lot that shared a boundary with land owned by Joshua's Trust. We

thought, quite sensibly, that there was something to be said for land that would not be developed, and opportunities for passive recreation were conveniently located.



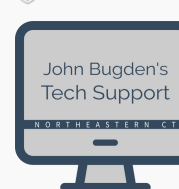
Soon after moving in, we were invited by one of our daughters to join her on a walk on the trail; we were joined by a co-steward of the property. One thing led to another, and before long I was asked to be a co-steward. There was no compelling reason why not, and the demand on time was not onerous. Besides, I thought, someone has to do it, and I have always preferred the outdoors to the indoors. I learned from active volunteers about blazing, trail maintenance and inspecting boundaries and other areas for encroachments. The interactions with others were almost always pleasant.

*Continued on page 6*

## THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



StanleyBlack&Decker



# JOSHUA'S TRUST NEWS

## SPOTLIGHTING OUR VOLUNTEERS

### Easement Monitor – Karen Zimmer

Karen became an easement monitor shortly after her husband passed away. They had been planning to move, but Karen decided to stay. Being retired, she was looking for something to do and since she had always like Joshua's Trust trails, she filled out the volunteer form on the website. Not long after, someone from JT reached out and before she knew it she was an easement monitor. She's now been monitoring five easements for nearly a decade. When she became an easement monitor she didn't know what it meant. She has since learned that an easement is another way to protect land without the Trust owning it.



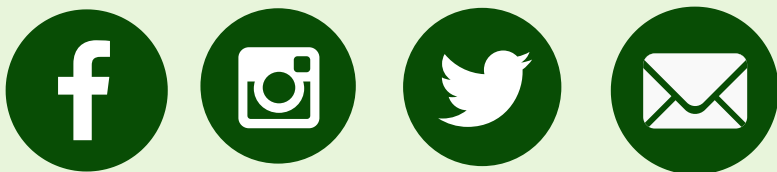
Every easement is different and as the monitor it is her responsibility to keep in touch with each easement land owner and ensure that the easement requirements are being adhered to and that abutting land owners are not encroaching. She does this by walking the property at least once a year and filling out documentation of what she sees. If she does find an issue, she reports it to JT staff who will address the matter appropriately. Her favorite part of volunteering as easement monitor is getting to know the land owners. One easement owner, Sharyn Mathews, has a large blueberry patch that Karen has had the luxury of being able to pick from. Another owner is an engineer and during the gypsy moth infestation he shared his strategy of getting rid of egg sacks by using a portable vacuum that he had outfitted for the task. It is clear that Karen loves being an easement monitor and she acknowledges just how important the work is for conservation.

**A large portion of the Ashford Oak (right) has fallen. In a recent blog post about the oak, George Jacobi says, "The Ashford Oak, *Quercus borealis maxima*, was 97' tall at its tallest, 32' in circumference a foot from the ground, and had a branch spread of 135 feet. It could easily shade the whole Gampel Pavilion basketball court. Talk about a carbon sequestration organism!...Yes, it's dying now. Don't be sad; be amazed. Stop by to thank it."**



## WANT TO SEE MORE OF JOSHUA'S TRUST?

*Follow us on social media!*



@joshuastrust @joshuas\_trust @JoshuasTrust\_ joshuastrust.org





## SPOTLIGHTING OUR VOLUNTEERS (CONTINUED)

### **Steward – Ann Dunnack**

Ann Dunnack says she was a steward of Utley Preserve before Joshua's Trust owned it or she knew what stewarding was. As a little girl her brother asked her "Do you want to hike with me?" He brought her to the Utley property for the first time and she was hooked on the property. Fast forward a decade or so and she moved into a house that abutted the property and it became her backyard. When she learned that Joshua's Trust had acquired the property, she was thrilled. She called the Trust and said "I'm the steward of Utley." While the actual stewards at the time likely laughed, it wasn't long before she was officially volunteering with Joshua's Trust as not only Utley's steward but also stewarding Elizabeth Couch Preserve, Goldberg Parcel, and more recently Schmid Overlook. When she did become an official steward, she was surprised to learn "Oh, we need to keep records." The business of boundaries (marking them, observing them, and defending them) hadn't occurred to her. She said the most important thing a steward does is to have "boots on the ground," being on the property at least monthly (though for her more likely daily). If there's a trail, the steward must make sure it stays well maintained and marked. Ann once found a lost hiker at Utley and immediately improved signage so it wouldn't happen again. In Ann's words "It's so rewarding because it's such an important job. It's taking a walk in the woods two times a month. What's the big deal? It's so important for the property, for your mental health, for the Trust, for the greater community. Because let me tell you during COVID there were hundreds of people out there. The trails show how much they were used. It is so important for JT to have well-stewarded properties to keep our communities sane and safe."



### **Docent – Terry Wakeman**

Terry Wakeman became a docent at the Gurleyville Grist Mill in the 90's. He's always been interested in the Grist Mill and mills in general. He saw being a docent as a way for him to take his time and really be able to explore the mill. Prior to that he had done volunteer work for Joshua's Trust that was more laborious like trail and bridge building. He's always surprised by the ebb and flow of visitors to the mill. Sometimes it's quiet, other times very busy. He was also surprised to learn that even among mill experts there's a lot of disagreement about the age of the different parts of the mill. Being a docent is a time commitment but when people come to explore the mill who really have an interest, it's all worth it. For Terry, the mill was really the start of the town. Towns would start with a mill, then there would be a blacksmith, then a barrel shop, general store, and so on. Without the mill, Mansfield might not be here today. But now, as a docent, Terry can't help but wonder, what can we do so that people can see the mill 100 years from now?



***The Grist Mill, then and now.***





## SPOTLIGHTING OUR VOLUNTEERS (CONTINUED)

### **Ellie Penn - Office Filing**

Ellie Penn wasn't necessarily looking to volunteer for Joshua's Trust, though she certainly believed in the mission and had seen the many properties preserved in the area. She was approached by board member John Hankins, who had thought her 30 years of experience cataloging at the UConn library might be of help to the files here at Joshua's Trust. Since she started earlier this year, Ellie, with the help of Hill Bullard, has gone through 2 years of back filing. Filing that includes maps, boundary crews surveys of properties and abutters, along with field notes, correspondence from neighbors, legal documents, and more. These files are critical not only for keeping in line with standards and practices, but also for being able to protect and defend the land that Joshua's Trust works tirelessly to preserve. One thing Ellie has learned since volunteering is that land is personal. It has a story and elicits strong emotions in those who own it. That's just one of the many reasons that Ellie feels passionately about preserving the land for the future.



### **Linda Pelletier and Shu Jiang - Trail Crew Volunteers**

Linda Pelletier and Shu Jiang are regulars at Joshua's Trust trail crews. Each has been actively doing trail crews for the past two years. Linda first got involved when she was looking for a family volunteer opportunity in her community (her whole family gets involved!) Meanwhile Shu had a friend send her the link to the Joshua's Trust website and "the next thing I know, I was cleaning up an icy bridge on the property behind the Mansfield Public Library." The Pelletiers were surprised to learn how extensive Joshua's Trust is and they have loved learning the stories behind the acquisitions of each property. Shu is constantly amazed at the problem-solving skills that come out when working on maintaining the trails. Both Linda and Shu enjoy working with the Joshua's Trust staff and fellow volunteers. When asked what else she had to share about volunteering for a trail crew Shu said "Don't hesitate, no hour of life is wasted that is spent volunteering on a trail crew!"

## OTHER WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

There are numerous other ways to volunteer besides those we've already mentioned. Below is a (not extensive) list of other ways you can get involved with the work of preserving and conserving land in eastern Connecticut for the benefit of everyone who comes after us.

*Photographer - Have a phone? Send us pictures!*

*Walk leader - Have an area of expertise? Lead a walk.*

*Gardener - We have gardens at Atwood that need tending.*

*Boundary crew - Find and mark the boundaries of JT properties as part of a team.*

# JOSHUA'S TRUST NEWS

## ANSWER THE CALL (CONTINUED)

As time went on, I was asked to do more. Easing into retirement, I had more time. At a stewardship committee meeting, the head of the boundary crew mentioned that volunteers were needed. The activity sounded like fun to me and I raised my hand. The last few years of boundary work have been a joy, combining strenuous outdoor activity and camaraderie with puzzle-solving mental exercise.

Finally, I was approached to take on organizational responsibility. In this capacity I have met many wonderful people and hopefully have helped to facilitate organizational excellence into the future.

For me, the moral of the story is to think carefully before reflexively declining an opportunity to volunteer. Good things can happen if we open the door when opportunity knocks. I don't know what course my life may have taken if we had not moved next to a land trust, and perhaps another direction would also have been fulfilling. But, I like to think that I have incrementally helped in the efforts to conserve land, to provide passive recreation, and to promote forest and wildlife health. And regardless of any benefits I may have conferred, I know that experience with Joshua's Trust has enriched my life. I have received more than I have given.



**It's time for the annual Cider Pressing at Atwood Farm. Join us as we use a traditional cider press to make apple cider (with maybe a few apples from the Atwood Orchard).**

**October 15, 2022  
2:00-4:00 pm**



A collaboration between the Town of Mansfield, Joshua's Trust and CFPA resulted in a new bridge at Wolf Rock. It all happened because Trustee John Hankins was willing to ask. Read the full story of the collaboration on the Joshua's Trust Blog. ([joshuastrust.org/category/blog](https://joshuastrust.org/category/blog))





# OUR NEW LAND PROTECTION MANAGER

by Bryan Avery

Greetings! Bryan Avery here, the new Land Protection Manager for JT. I'm incredibly excited to be joining the JT community. The great outdoors has been a cornerstone of my life since childhood. In scouting, I spent my weekends camping, trail building, hiking, and paddling all across the northeast. With a BA in Geology and MS in Parks and Natural Resource Management, I have a love for all aspects of conservation from the ground up.



My overarching goal with JT is to enhance all our conservation efforts in the region and diversify our network of people utilizing the properties for their time in nature. Here too, a ground up approach is the key to success. In my ten years of experience working in outdoor and STEM education, I can come to one essential for all people and professionals interested in the outdoors: a love of nature comes first. Building a love of nature in school students through programs on JT's beautiful properties will grow the next generation of stewards, volunteers, professionals, partners, donors, staffers, and trustees. Through showing JT's value to the regional community, I plan to build the basis of support for JT's outreach as well as acquisitions efforts. I'm excited to share the story of our successes as a way to build lasting support for our historic organization.

In addition to my passion for nature education, I also am passionate about using technology to improve all aspects of our land conservation mission. Protecting land in perpetuity demands the smartest decisions we can make; smart data enables smart decisions. I love working smarter; smart acquisitions driven by GIS mapping, smart outreach driven by best teaching practices, smart stewardship driven by monitoring data and smart development driven communications data.



As change in our human world accelerates, I will be striving to conserve our Quiet Corner for future generations to improve its habitat value for wildlife, and to make its natural beauty and restorative power available to everyone. I look forward to meeting everyone, hopefully under a blue sky and a canopy of green. See you in the woods!

## Membership

Membership is given for one year to anyone who gives at least one dollar to Joshua's Trust. Our members are critical to the mission of Joshua's Trust and have the important role of voting on new trustees and other issues at our annual meeting every April. Become a member of JT today by returning the envelope in this newsletter.

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# LEAVE A LEGACY

**Don't forget that you can still make a difference both today and tomorrow by making estate plans that include Joshua's Trust. If you notify Joshua's Trust of your estate plans for the future, a generous donor couple will give \$750 to Joshua's Trust TODAY!**

**To learn more about the Bequest Challenge visit  
[joshuastrust.org/bequest-challenge](http://joshuastrust.org/bequest-challenge) or email  
[kailyn.kowolenko@joshuastrust.org](mailto:kailyn.kowolenko@joshuastrust.org).**